

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claim 4 has been canceled and the subject matter thereof has been incorporated into Claim 1. Additionally, the subject matter taken from Claim 4 has been clarified to recite that the convexities are substantially triangular such that their thickness reduces from large to small from the bases disposed on the fitting hole to the tips thereof. Claim 5 has been amended to clarify that the diameter of the fitting hole becomes larger in the direction approaching the installation member.

According to a feature of the invention, a projection projecting from an installation member may be removably connected to a cover member by a grommet held in a socket of the cover member, the grommet comprising a fitting hole and a plurality of convexities formed with a substantially triangular cross-sectional shape. The convexities can therefore readily deform to permit the joining or removal of the projection with the grommet while holding the grommet securely within the socket of the cover body (paragraph [0035]).

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. patent 3,861,812 (Ito). However, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 clearly defines over Ito.

Ito is directed to a ball socket for use with a windshield wiper, and includes a flanged opening 19-20 (which the Examiner evidently considers to be a “socket”) in a link member 4 (which the Examiner evidently considers to be a cover body), wherein a ball 11 (which the Examiner evidently considers to be a projection) of a crank arm 3 is held in the flanged opening by a socket part 10 (which the Examiner evidently considers to be a “grommet”) having arms (evidently, “convexities”) 15 which secure the socket part 10 to the link 4.

Claim 1 recites that the grommet is elastically deformable. Accordingly, the fitting hole may be diametrically enlarged by the projection 3 and held firmly in the socket by the

elastic reaction force exerted from the triangular convexities (paragraph [0051]). However, there is no evidence in Ito that the socket part (“grommet”) 10 is elastically deformable. Indeed, the socket part 10 is preferably made of polyacetal which is a “very hard” plastic (see attached description of polyacetal taken from <http://www.specialchem4polymers.com/sf/Ciba/index.aspx?id=Polyacetal>).

Additionally, Claim 1 now further recites that the convexities are formed as a substantially rectangular cross-sectional shape whose thickness reduces from large to small in a direction away from the bases to the tips thereof. It is clear from Figure 9 of Ito that the arms 15a (“convexities”) are rectangular and are not reduced in thickness from the bases to the tips thereof. Claim 1 therefore clearly defines over Ito.

Claim 8 further recites a regular disposed at a portion facing the head of the projection and extending radially inward close to the fitting hole, the regulator provided with an air vent hole communicating the fitting hole with the outside. No such regular is taught in Ito et al.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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